

they did not unduly and unreasonably put up the price. Now that the words are in the Act I am not disposed to eliminate them, because if men do not unduly combine it is only right that they should have the right to combine. I believe that combines in capital, as well as in labor, are sometimes in the interests of the public. It may be in the public interest sometimes to restrict production by means of combination, in order that prices may be duly and reasonably raised. The price of labor, for instance, may be increased in that way in the interest of society. Reference has been made to the sugar combine and the refinery at Halifax. I was, unfortunately, interested in that institution myself. Owing to over-production and low prices the refinery had to shut down, and I lost some thousands of dollars. Common prudence would dictate at times that trade must be restricted within certain limits, and in order to restrict it, it may be necessary even to suspend operations for a time. Therefore, I do not think that it is wise to eliminate these words from the Act. I am sure that no prosecutions could be sustained where undue and unreasonable combination to put up the price could not be proved. Unless these two elements are proved, such a prosecution could not be sustained.

HON. MR. McMILLAN—And it ought not to be sustained.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—Certainly not; therefore these words should be retained in the Act. If the object of the Bill is to destroy all combinations, then I believe we would be striking at the vital interests of this country; therefore I am opposed to this measure. The parties who have brought this Bill before us have not shown that it is impossible to bring the law into force. I do not know that it has ever been tried. All that was shown is that sugar refiners had entered into a combination with an association of grocers to put up the price of sugar, and to sell only to members of that association, and outsiders cannot get the sugar except at a higher price. I believe that is undue combination under the present law, and if they were prosecuted I have no doubt that a verdict would be rendered against them by the courts. I know that there is a feeling in this country that combinations exist that are not in the interests of the community, and it is

well that this discussion should take place, for it is by discussion that some step may be suggested to check the evil if it does exist. If it is necessary to stop this or any other combination in the public interest, a jury would find against it if a suit were brought under this Act; and it is also evident that nobody would be punished before a court and jury for having combined if the combination was not undue and unreasonable. As regards the National Policy, although it is said that we are fostering bloated monopolists, we believed that competition would prevent anything of the kind—that things would come down to their proper level; and I believe so still, notwithstanding the statements of some hon. gentlemen to the contrary. No combination can exist in this country against the public interests—the public mind would become so exasperated against anything of the kind that if a suit were brought before a court and jury under the existing law a summary remedy would be applied. Therefore, I am disposed to sustain and continue the words “unduly” and “unreasonably” in the Act.

HON. MR. VIDAL—While I am extremely unwilling to say anything to disparage the speeches which have been made so very earnestly and sincerely by the hon. gentlemen from Quinté and Monck, I feel that the interests of truth require that I should make some observations on their remarks. It appears to me that long and earnest as those speeches were, and full of detail, I did not hear one single word of argument upon the question which is now before this House. Had there been a Bill before us to repeal the anti-Combine Act of last year I could have understood how all their earnestness would be stirred up and their eloquence enlisted to defeat the repeal of such an Act. But this House has recognized all the evils that these gentlemen complain of, and they have joined with the other House in putting upon the Statute-book a law to prevent and to punish these very things that they complain of. It looks as if they were setting up a man of straw in order to knock it down again, for neither of them has touched the question before the House, and that is, whether these words “unduly” and “unreasonably” are to be taken out of the Act in order to make it operative and effective. Surely the first thing we should ask